

Maggie Blough

# THE CHILD AT HOME



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## MORE WINGED GEMS.

LAST summer I took the young readers of THE CHILD AT HOME on a little journey, in imagination, to see some humming-birds. Go with me now to a large island in the Pacific Ocean, thousands of miles west of the Sandwich Islands, as far beyond them as they are beyond San Francisco, farther even than the Micronesian Islands. The island is called New Guinea. It lies in a region where the summer never ends. Its inhabitants are degraded savages, with no knowledge of God and Jesus. But in its dense dark forests, hiding away from the light, are the most beautiful birds in the world. They are called Birds of Paradise. You may think them sadly misnamed; for the country

is not much like the Paradise of the Bible. But the word paradise meant, at first, a beautiful garden or park, and such places would be paradises indeed, if it were not for the wickedness of man.

The largest bird in the picture is called the Emerald bird of Paradise, a proud and showy creature, in his robes of velvety green and yellow and brown, and spreading over himself his veil of light and airy plumes. Near by, at the left, is his modest mate, who is not like some little girls that I know; for they are anxious to look a great deal prettier than their brothers, and dress much finer.

The other little gem of a bird is called the King Bird of Paradise. It is no larger than a common sparrow; but is so curiously marked with brilliant

colors, and has two such odd-looking green-tipped stems among its tail-feathers, that I am not sure but you will call it the funniest bird you ever saw.

What were these birds made for? One thing they were made for was, no doubt, to look pretty, and thus give pleasure to you and me. Now for another question, What were *you* made for? — you who have a soul and will never die — a soul that is worth more than all the world? Were you made for anything more than to look pretty, like these little birds? Yes, you were made to be good and do good, to have your *soul* beautiful, to glorify God and enjoy Him forever.

UNCLE ED.

## HELP FOR LITTLE PILGRIMS.

BY MRS. GRACE W. HINSDALE.

JESUS bids us help each other  
On our way —  
"Carry one another's burdens,"  
He doth say,

Well then, little pilgrim brother,  
Are you sad? —  
Jesus Christ has sweetly bid me  
Make you glad.

I have watched your weary footsteps,  
Up life's hill,  
And would gladly help you onward,  
If you will.

I'm a sinful little brother,  
At your side;  
But the blood of Jesus saved me  
When He died.

JESUS bids me seek thee, loving,  
Little friend;  
And to tell thee He is willing  
Help to send.

He has seen thee walking sadly  
Midst thy tears,  
And He gently chides thee, brother,  
For thy fears.

Tell me truly why thou weepest  
All alone;  
Jesus longs to send thee sunshine,  
From His throne.

Doth no pilgrim older, wiser,  
Comfort thee? —  
God be praised I have a mother  
Near to me.

I would help thee bear thy burdens,  
If I may,  
For I long my loving Master  
To obey.

Ah, I see the tears are leaving  
Thy sad face, —  
Jesus my poor effort blesses  
With His grace!

We will walk together, brother,  
Toward our home,  
Where no pilgrims, weak and weeping,  
Sadly roam.

"Behold the fowls of the air; for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your Heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?" — Matt. vi. 26.



## HELEN'S HOME MEETING.

BY GENESEE.

BABY HELEN was six years old before we could drop the "Baby" from her name. She was not babyish, and was a brave and healthy little girl, but she was the youngest of the family, and "Baby" was her pet name. We said it instead of Nellie or Ellie, for we were tired of so many "ie's;" and instead of "Nell," for we don't like the recent Kits, Molls, and Madges much better.

So brave was Baby Helen that when she was only five her mother left her alone for a month with her Aunt Mary, who lived in another town. Aunt Mary had no children in her house, and was afraid the baby would be lonesome. But no; though she missed her brothers and sisters, she was determined to be happy. When the first evening came, she only said, softly: "Now if there was being a great frolic here, it would be very pleasant to join in it."

Well, of course, Aunt Mary took care to have some frolics and to make things pleasant, so that the week-days flew quickly away. When Sunday came, and there could be no riding and no merry work going on about the house, Aunt Mary began to think how she should manage.

They went to church in the morning, and Baby Helen was so quiet and good there, that Aunt Mary hoped she could take her in the afternoon.

"Oh no, ma'am," said Helen, when Aunt Mary proposed it after dinner. "No indeed, please! Your minister preaches too long. He preaches three hours!" Aunt Mary knew she must not urge so little a darling to go twice. "Then we will have a meeting at home," said she. "Let's get the church ready."

"Oh yes! less me-and-you get it ready," answered Helen. Then Aunt Mary drew a square ottoman in front of the sofa. She put a Bible, a hymn-book, and a great book of Sunday poetry, filled with pictures, upon the ottoman. She sent Helen into the next room for a cricket. "And oh," said she, "run and get your black dolls, Sambo and Patty, and let them go to meeting too."

Baby Helen laughed all over as she ran for her black playfellows. They were real beings to her. She trotted back with one under each arm, and her eyes were sparkling with eager pleasure, and there was a queer little loving glance, as much as to say, "I see you're so good to my dear dollies that I will be very good myself." Aunt Mary set Sambo and his wife down, with their hands folded, in a chair close to the ottoman, and seated herself on the sofa, placing little Helen on the cricket at her feet.

"First we will read the Bible," said Aunt Mary. She took the story of the good Joseph and his wicked brothers, and read the Bible words, telling them over in her own way once in a while. Her little listener asked many questions. For instance, whether Joseph's brethren fed their flocks with scraps off the plates as she fed her cat at home? — her gray cat, which Uncle George had named 'Pussabella Scratchetta Squallina Purr Miouw.' Why God let Joseph be sold for a slave when he was such a good boy? and whether Joseph's coat of many colors was an overcoat?

When the story came to the coat being dipped in blood, Helen drew a long breath. "Oh well!" said she, "I did suppose those brethren might have grown good by this time, but they're just as worse as ever."

"Then you have heard this story before," said Aunt Mary.

"Yes, ma'am, twenty-seven times."

"Then are not you tired of it?"

"Oh no, m'm. Now you tell all about what good care God took of poor little Joseph."

It was a long time before Aunt Mary got so far as the singing for Helen's meeting. She gave out the hymn: —

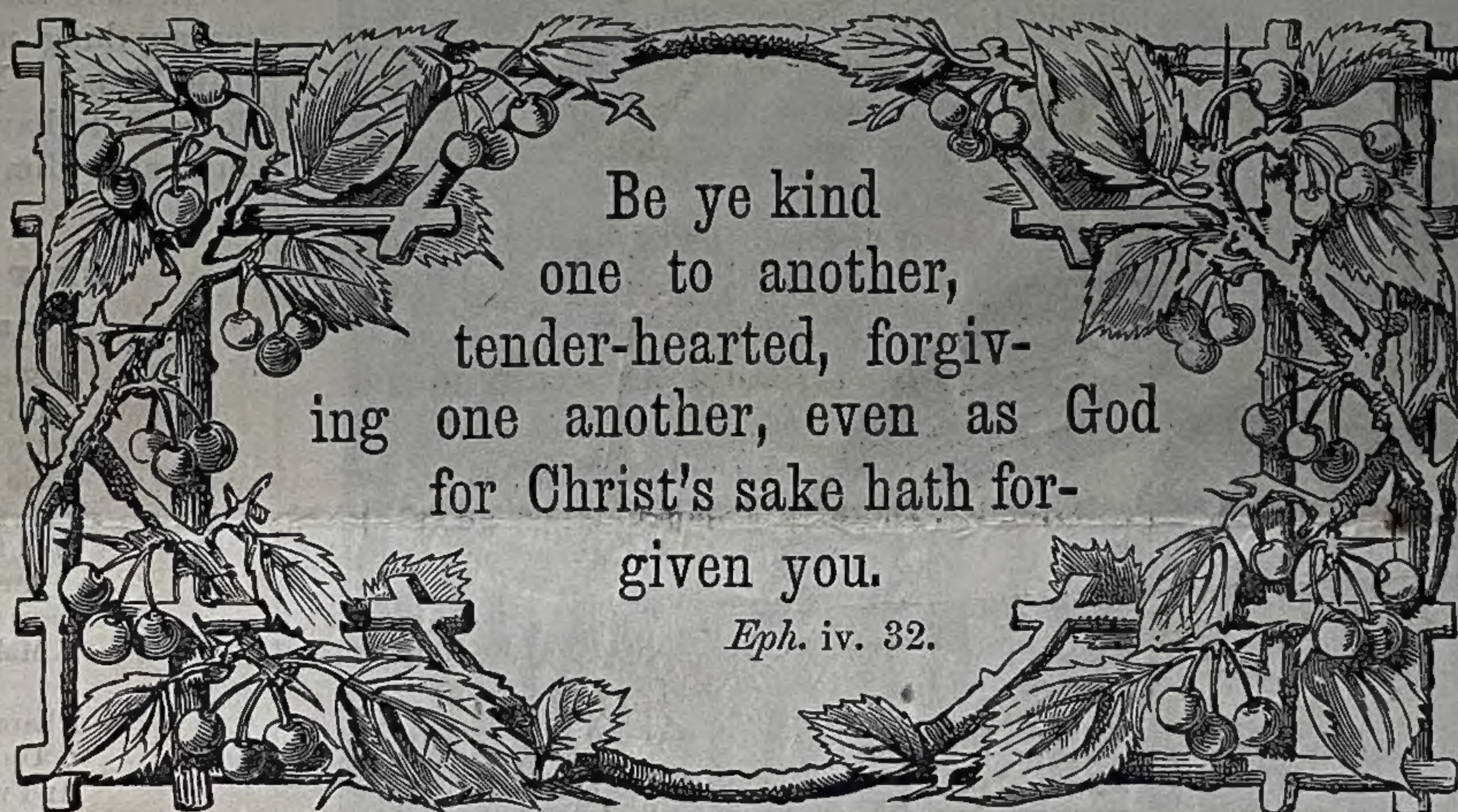
"Glory to the Father give,  
God in whom we move and live;  
Children's praise He loves to hear,  
Children's songs delight His ear."

Helen could strike in with her clear little voice, though she could not catch the words. After that came the pictures. There was a cluster of children around their mother's knee; a Ruth amid the golden corn; a stormy night-scene, and Jesus walking on the water. All these had a story to tell. When they came to a picture of Jesus on the cross, Baby Helen hid her face. "It makes me feel awful bad," said she. "But He was willing to suffer," she added, looking again.

"Yes," said Aunt Mary, "and He is not suffering now. It is all over. He is blessed and glorious, and is sitting like a King upon His throne. What is best of all, He is now here in this room too, though He is not in sight. He notices what I am saying at this very moment, and would hear if I spoke to Him. Let us pray, and He will listen."

Helen dropped her head upon the book, and Aunt Mary prayed and said: "Dear Lord, we are glad that Thou art so near. We thank Thee that Thou takest care of us as Thou didst take care of Joseph. We thank Thee most of all that Thou wert willing to suffer on the cross for us. We pray Thee to help us be loving and obedient and good. Amen."

When she had done speaking, Aunt Mary saw



that Helen did not lift her head. She was whispering a prayer of her own. Aunt Mary could not hear the words, and did not ask about them, but she felt sure that she and her little lamb had a meeting with the Good Shepherd that Sunday afternoon.

## MY VINE.

BY MRS. HERBERT.

WHEN I was a little girl, my father built a new house, with a piazza at one end; and when it was all done, I coaxed him every day to set out a vine to run over the pillars. One morning he said: —

"I will try to have your vine set out to-day, Nettie: shall it be a rose, or a honeysuckle, or what shall it be?"

"Something that will grow fast, papa; I am in such a hurry to see the pretty green running round the front post."

"If that is the idea, pet, it shall be a woodbine, which will grow rapidly."

The vine was set out, and I watched its growth with a child's eager interest, until a tender little leafy stem came twining up the white pillar. When it had run once round, and was getting towards the back side in a second circuit, I took it into my head to make it turn and run across the front side again, instead of going round out of sight upon the back side, according to its own impulse; so I gently turned the principal stem back, stuck in a pin to hold it, and went my way. The next morning, the stem, escaped from the restraint of my pin, was rapidly pursuing its natural course around the pillar.

"You're a naughty thing," complained I, "to go just where Nettie don't want you to, after all she

has done for you. Who had you set out, and watered you, and watched you, and took care of you, but Nettie? and you shall go just where she wants you to, and nowhere else."

So saying, Nettie, who had a pretty strong will of her own, went for hammer and tacks, and again turning back the vine from its natural course, fastened it this time securely. When she next looked at her vine, she cried to see it all withered and drooping; but although she had hammered many of the leaves to death, she had not broken or bruised the stem, and soon she was delighted to see fresh leaves start out, and the vine flourish as before. When the stem had crossed the front, and again tried to get round the back side of the pillar by the other way, Nettie again produced hammer and nails, and was about to compel it still to keep in view upon the front side, when her father, happening to notice her, said: —

"I wouldn't do that, Nettie; it is natural for your vine to run round and round, and it will grow faster, and be a great deal prettier, if you let it follow its bent." So Nettie, who was quite sure her father knew best, cheerfully put away her hammer, and let the vine grow on undisturbed.

A few weeks later, as Nettie was crossing the piazza with her father, he paused to train up some tendrils of the vine which were trailing downwards, saying as he did so, —

"You are neglecting your vine, Nettie; you must keep it trained up if you want it to be thrifty and pretty."

"But, papa, I haven't dared to touch it since you told me to let it follow its bent!" My father laughed, saying, —

"You must train it as I try to train my little ones; let it follow its bent, and keep it going round and round daily, in the right way, with a sharp lookout for all the stray shoots that try to run wild." So I learned to train my vine, and it thrived, making the place beautiful, until about the time it reached the piazza eaves, when we left the place, and I did not see it again until the green stems had become great woody stocks, which stood out bare, stripped of foliage by autumn frosts and winds, as my father and I passed the house.

"Look at your vine, my daughter, and notice its training."

Looking, I saw, near the foot of the pillar, the great woody main stem awkwardly bent as squarely about as it could be without being killed, thus returning upon its course, and then running gracefully round and round up to the eaves; thence running wild over the shingled roof, which had become rotten and leaky in consequence.

"There is an ugly and unnatural crook down there, papa, the result of my childish whim and ignorance; then the vine grew well, with judicious training, until it was left to itself, when, instead of festooning itself gracefully around the piazza, as we intended to have it, it ran wild into mischief upon the roof."

## BE GENEROUS.

"FREELY ye have received,  
So freely give,"  
Take lessons of the earth  
On which we live.

Upon the meadow's lap  
The warm rays lie,  
And grass, and buttercups,  
Smile toward the sky.

Moisture, and heat, and light  
To earth are given,  
And fruit and flowers send back  
Sweet thanks to Heaven.

F. B. S.





## OUR BABY.

VIOLETS blooming in the spring,  
Birds that in the wild March sing,  
Buds that start from stately trees, —  
Sweet and welcome are all these,  
But sweeter far our baby!

Violets ope their petals fair,  
Shed their perfume on the air;  
Look we in their azure eyes,  
Greet their bloom with glad surprise,  
But love far more our baby!

Warbling notes through woodlands ring,  
List we as the robins sing;  
But we know a sweeter note  
Than could gush from birdling's throat,  
It is the voice of baby.

Buds upon the leafless bough,  
Tell us spring is coming now;  
Though they make our glad hearts bound,  
One more precious we have found, —  
Beauteous bud, the baby.

Violets bloom, and then they die,  
Birds till autumn sing, then fly;  
Buds oft wither on the tree, —  
God in heaven, O, shall it be  
Thus with our dear baby?

No! all these are earthly things,  
But the *soul* — from heaven it springs;  
Angels are its faithful guard;  
God Himself keeps watch and ward  
O'er our blessed baby.

Buds of heaven can ne'er decay:  
There 'tis never-ending May.  
Jesus, to that home above,  
Saved by Thy redeeming love,  
Take, at last, our baby.

LIZZIE.

## "SWEAR NOT AT ALL."

HARK! Do I not hear Annie saying, — "This isn't for me, so I will skip over it. Charlie Davis, or some of those bad boys who swear so horribly, ought to read that."

Please, Annie, take your Testament and turn to the fifth chapter of Matthew, and, beginning with the thirty-fourth verse, read through the thirty-seventh. Tell me, is there nothing there for you? We will try to find out. Let us listen to a short conversation.

"What did you say just now, Jimmy?" asked Miss Graves of her little Sabbath-school scholar.

"I said I had forgotten to bring my Bible to school this morning."

"But that wasn't all you said, my boy," continued the teacher.

"I didn't know I said anything else."

"Think again, perhaps you will remember."

"Did I say 'mercy'? I use that word so often, I don't know when I say it. Mother has tried to break me of it," said Jimmy, thoughtfully.

"Yes, Jimmy, I referred to that. And now I want to ask you," said Miss Graves, "what good does it do to say it? Did it add anything to the fact of your forgetting, or excuse it either?"

"Oh no! only I have learned to say it, and can't help it now."

"When you walk through the streets and hear men swearing such horrid oaths, and boys repeating them, do you not often feel as a little girl once said to me, 'I wouldn't do it for anything?' And yet you have not followed. Jesus instructs us at that very point. He says, — 'Swear not at all. But let our communications be yea, yea; nay, nay.'"

"But, Miss Graves, you don't mean to say that I swear. Why, I know a great many good people who say 'goodness!' and 'mercy!' and words of that kind."

"I know it Jimmy, I know it, and yet I think the third commandment forbids the speaking lightly both of God's name and His attributes, which are goodness, mercy, and so on. Perhaps those good people have never thought of it in this light."

I knew a good Christian lady who was doing all in her power to lead others to Jesus, but who had unconsciously fallen into the habit of using one of these words. A friend, who felt her influence thereby would be injured, drew her attention to it, and after many efforts and much prayer she overcame the habit.

Now, Annie, didn't I hear you say the other day, "Goodness! I have torn my dress, what will mother say?" Was your communication, then, according to Christ's rule?

Miss Graves, I think, was right when she told Jimmy that the use of all such words is forbidden in the third commandment. And now, if you or any of my little readers are convinced of sin in this particular, remember that the Bible says, in regard to all sins, —

"Whose confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy."

## THE GREAT CLOCK AT STRASBOURG.

BY MRS. H. E. BROWN.

A CLOCK is a wonderful sort of thing, isn't it, children? There it stands ticking away all the time, its tiny hands pointing to every hour and minute as they pass, with an exactness which makes it seem like a living being. Indeed, I don't believe a person could be so exact and faithful as a clock, for men get tired, but clocks never do.

But wonderful as the clock appears that stands on your mother's mantel, or in the corner of grandmother's hall, it is nothing compared with some others I have seen; compared with the one in the picture, for instance.

That is as large as the front of the house you live in. Think of that! And think of a clock that will tell not only the hours and minutes of the day, but the days, weeks, and months of the year, like an almanac; that tells all the movements of the sun, moon, and planets, and many other things beside.

This clock is in a great, splendid church in the city of Strasbourg. Strasbourg was a French city until a few months ago, when the Prussians, who, you know, have been at war with France, conquered and took possession of it. Before the city was given up to them, the Prussians fired a great many balls and shells into it, and some of them hit the church, but the clock was not hurt. Oh, how glad the people have been, all through Europe and America, that it was not injured, for it is one of the wonders of the world!

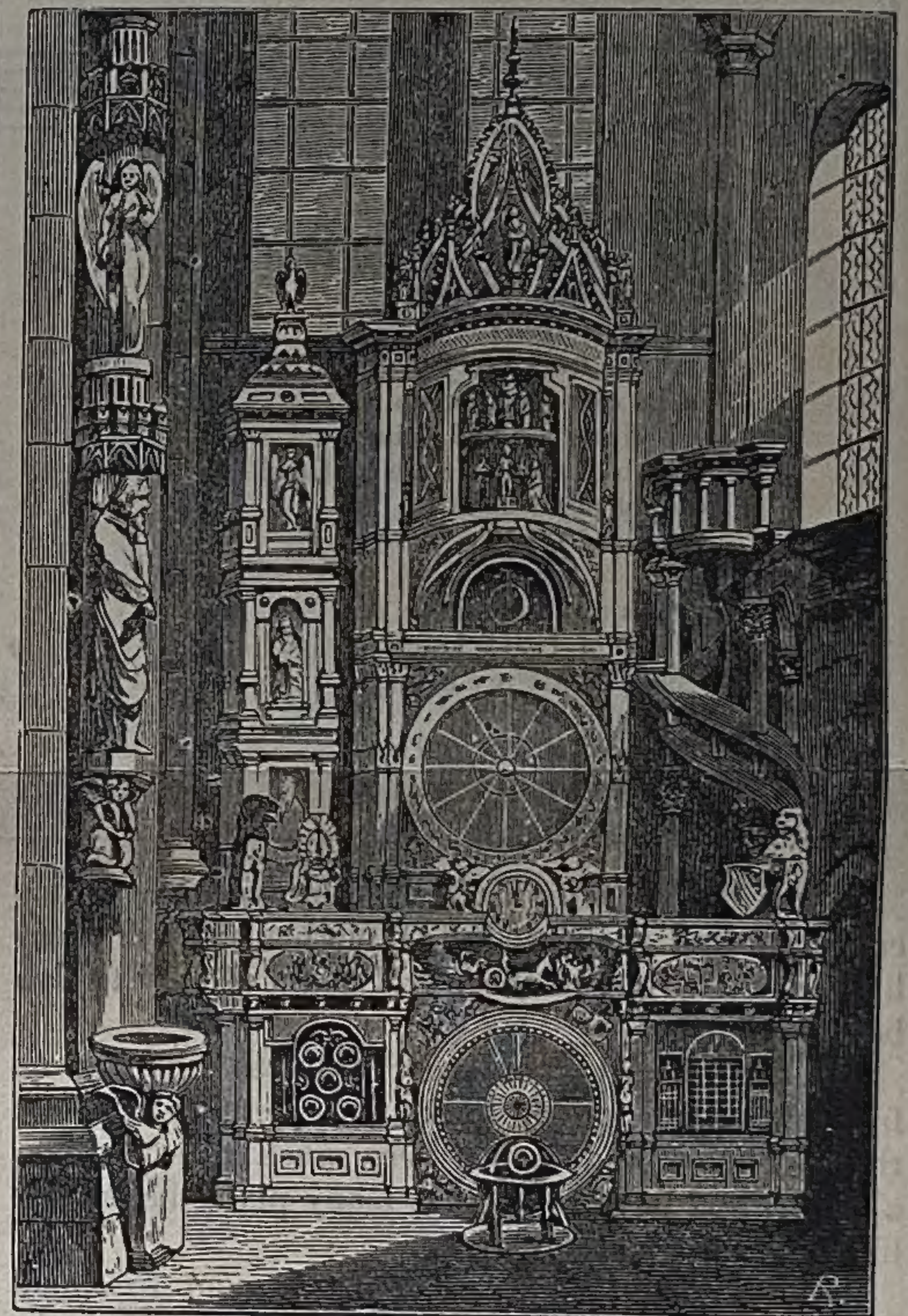
Look at the picture, and I will tell you about it. First notice the dial-plate, where, as in every clock, we tell the time of day. Over this dial you see a bell, and on each side of it, the image of a little boy, as large as your baby-brother. One of these little fellows has a mallet in his hand, and when a full hour arrives, he strikes with it on the bell. The other holds an hour-glass, which he turns over at the same moment.

Above the dial is a larger circle, which tells the motions of the stars, and next, over that, one which shows the changes of the moon. Just above this, you see an alcove, in which is a grim, ugly looking figure, called Father Time. He has a bell in one hand, and a scythe in the other, which, I suppose, is meant to show that when the right time comes,

he cuts down every living being. There are four figures that pass before this old Father Time, one each quarter of an hour. These represent the four stages of life. The first is a little child, the second a fair youth, the third a grown-up man, and the fourth an old person.

Above this alcove is another, in which you see a number of figures. The central one is our Saviour, and every day, at noon, the others, which are meant for the twelve apostles, march slowly past it, and bow, while the holy image lifts its hands in blessing upon them. And as the last one goes out, a monstrous cock, which you see perched on a pinnacle of the clock, at the left hand, slowly flaps his wings, and crows three times. The crowing is as natural as life, and is so loud that it can be heard outside the church.

You see on the clock many images besides, but they are only for ornament. I have explained all those which have motion and meaning. And all these are moved by machinery which is arranged at the back of the clock, where there are large, comfortable rooms. Stairs at the right hand lead up into these rooms, and there the workmen are always



busy keeping all the parts of the machinery in repair. It took three hundred years to make this great clock perfect as it now is. At one time it stopped, and fifty years went by before any one was found who knew enough to put it in order again. It took a very wise head, I am sure, to find out how to do this, and it must take wise heads and skillful hands to keep it going.

When any of you go to Europe, it will be worth while for you to journey by the way of Strasbourg, that you may visit the clock; and you must remember to be there just before twelve, that you may be ready to hear it strike that hour, when you will see the whole variety of movements which I have described. The apostles only take their walk once a day, and at that hour. And it is only then that the cock crows. So if you want to see the whole performance, be sure to be there at twelve o'clock.

I want to say one thing more. Wonderful as this clock is, it is but a poor piece of machinery in comparison with the perfect works of God, some of which this clock imitates. He who made the human body, and guides the motions of the planets, is truly "wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working."

## "A THOUSAND TIMES BETTER THAN CANDY."

THE choicest New Year's present that Lucy Lakin received was the colored "Child at Home." After she had read it she cut out the colored pictures, and her mother put them in neat little straw frames and hung them in her room.



